

# Policy and Administrative Regulations

CHAPTER 8: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

TITLE: PROBATIONARY PROCESS POLICY (8.14)

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**EFFECTIVE DATE: December 19, 2016**

**POLICY ORGANIZATION: Department of Human Resources**

APPROVAL

## I. PURPOSE

The probationary process provides both the employee and management an introductory period to assess performance and suitability for the position ensuring a placement that supports and reflects a well managed organization.

## II. POLICY

The City recognizes the importance of the probationary process as a means of providing new employees the opportunity to familiarize themselves with their new role, demonstrate their ability to achieve an acceptable level of performance and to assess their suitability for the new position. Managers and supervisors use this period to establish performance expectations and evaluate the new employee's capability, work habits, and overall performance.

An acceptable level of performance must be achieved during the probationary process to ensure continued employment.

This policy applies to all general employees appointed or promoted to positions in the classified service and sworn personnel in the Police and Fire-Rescue Departments.

## III. PROCEDURE

### A. Probationary Period Service

#### 1. Probationary periods are served upon:

- Original appointment
- Promotion
- Rehire after resignation or termination, except for reinstatement within two years of separation for general employees and within one year of separation for sworn members of the Police or Fire-Rescue Departments to the former classification for which the individual is certified
- Placement in a different classification as a result of a reduction-in-force
- Placement in an alternative classification within the same pay grade
- Demotion
- Civil Service Commission approved automatic reclassification

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## 2. Probationary periods are not served:

- When a position is reclassified, except for automatic reclassification
- Upon reinstatement, within two years of separation for general employees and within one year of separation for sworn members of the Police or Fire-Rescue Departments, to the former classification for which the individual is certified
- Upon reinstatement from disability separation to the same classification
- Lateral transfer to the same classification

## B. Length of Probationary Period

1. General employees appointed or promoted to positions in the classified service are required to serve a probationary period of six (6) months.
2. Sworn personnel in the Police and Fire-Rescue Departments appointed or promoted to positions in the classified service must serve a probationary period of twelve (12) months.

## C. Conditions of Probationary Period

During the period of probation, employees appointed or promoted to positions in the classified service may be terminated by the City Manager, or designee, without cause or hearing.

In certain circumstances, the Civil Service Commission may approve periods of time, during which a probationary employee does not perform all of the usual duties assigned to the position, as credited towards the completion of a probationary period. Examples of these circumstances include, but are not limited to, temporary disability or unavailability of the full course of training within the period of probation. The City Manager's support for these requests is required prior to a review by the Civil Service Commission. The cumulative number of days absent may not exceed twenty (20) work days, except for periods of military obligations, during the probationary period.

Employees serving a probationary period are eligible for employee benefits, excluding tuition assistance, and are eligible to apply for other City positions.

## D. Probationary Progress Reviews

Supervisors should establish performance expectations and outline job requirements for each probationary employee. These performance expectations should be established and communicated to the employee within the first thirty (30) calendar days of appointment.

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Employees should receive frequent coaching and feedback during the probationary period.

Employees will receive a performance review prior to the end of their probationary period. The performance review is documented on the performance evaluation form and typically conducted no later than two (2) weeks prior to the completion of the probationary period.

Employees achieving an acceptable level of performance will be notified in writing, by copy of the performance evaluation form, of successful completion of the probationary period.

Employees whose performance is considered unacceptable may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If a probationary employee works beyond a six-month period without being notified (1) of satisfactory completion of the probationary period or (2) the probationary period was extended, the employee will be regarded as having successfully completed the probationary period.

While performance expectations, frequent coaching and feedback should be provided to an employee during the probationary period, the absence of these actions does not preclude the City from terminating the employment of a probationary employee.

## E. Extension of Probationary Period

Requests for the extension of a probationary period must be submitted in writing, within the employee's probationary period, by the department head to the Director of Human Resources. With the City Manager's endorsement, the Civil Service Commission may extend the probationary period. Extensions will only be considered as a result of extenuating circumstances that did not provide the supervisor an adequate opportunity to observe and evaluate the probationary employee's work performance. The total probationary period extension may not exceed six months.

Employees will be notified in writing when their probationary period is extended.

## F. Corrective Action or Termination

Prior to, or in lieu of, termination, probationary employees may be disciplined. The Corrective Action Guidelines and Procedures, Policy 8.3, may be used as a guide, as Policy 8.3 does not apply to probationary employees.

If it is determined at any time during the probationary period that an employee is not suited for the job, the department head shall forward a Request for Termination to the Department of Human Resources. Human Resources will notify the

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department head of the determination of their request.

Probationary employees do not have access to the Grievance Procedure for the purpose of grieving their termination.

## IV. RESPONSIBILITY

### A. Human Resources

The Department of Human Resources is responsible for providing policy guidance.

### B. Department Heads

Department heads have the responsibility for ensuring managers and supervisors provide coaching and feedback to probationary employees and comply with the guidelines established by this policy.

### C. Managers/Supervisors

Managers and supervisors are responsible for managing the performance of probationary employees to include:

- Establishing and communicating performance expectations within thirty (30) calendar days of appointment;
- Providing ongoing coaching and feedback;
- Evaluating performance; and
- Notifying the employee of the status of the probationary period, e.g. successful completion as defined in Section III(D), or of an approved extension as defined in Section III(E).

### D. Employees

Employees are responsible for performing according to job expectations and requirements and participating in the performance evaluation process.

## V. HISTORY

N/A

## VI. AUTHORITY

City Charter, Section 112  
Civil Service Commission Rules

## VII. REGULATION UPDATE

Modifications of this policy shall be the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources under the advisement of the City Manager.